



CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF FOOD & AGRICULTURE

Bovine Tuberculosis (TB) in California

In April 2003, California was classified as **Modified Accredited Advanced (MAA)** because bovine TB had been confirmed in three dairy herds since May 2002. All three herds were quarantined, the cattle destroyed, and the affected premises cleaned and disinfected. All three herds have been repopulated and TB tested negative. California aims to reapply for Accredited Free status in April 2005, if no additional infected herds are detected.

Closing the Tuberculosis Task Force In Tulare

In June 2002, the California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) and the United States Department Agriculture (USDA) established a task force in Tulare to control and eradicate TB from the initial infected herd. Task force personnel have:

- Depopulated, cleaned and disinfected the three infected dairies.
- Completed the investigations on all three infected herds.
- Tested all dairy herds in Tulare, Kings and Fresno Counties, finding no disease beyond the infected herds.

The Tulare task force office has now closed. However, TB testing by government personnel continues throughout California - a total of 688 herds (876,069 cattle) have been tested between May 1, 2002 and June 22, 2004.

Cumulative Since May 13, 2002	
Number of herds tested	688
Number of animals tested	876,069
Number of herds quarantined	3
Number of cattle destroyed	~13,000
Average number of field personnel	30

Source of TB Infection

The source of infection in the three California dairy herds appears to be cattle imported from out of state. Two recent TB infected cattle - a heifer in Arizona (tested to move to Kansas) and a feedlot steer slaughtered in Wisconsin were traced back to a New Mexico calf raising facility.

The New Mexico calf facility raised approximately 14,000 heifer and bull calves at a time. Information on the premises of origin was not maintained. The majority of these cattle were shipped to feedlots for growing prior to breeding or slaughter. Once bred, heifers were dispersed throughout the US, including California.

CDFA and USDA employees are tracing and testing cattle imported into California from these Arizona, Kansas and New Mexico facilities over the last few years.

TB Surveillance in California

Surveillance in live cattle and at slaughter is key to rapid detection and eradication of TB. All cattle are examined for TB at slaughter. The goal for good surveillance is to examine tissues from one animal in the laboratory for every 2,000 adult cattle slaughtered. California's high cull rate - approximately 30% annually - helps TB surveillance. California continues to set high standards for slaughter surveillance; this enhanced surveillance led to the detection of the first and third infected herds.

Live cattle TB screening tests have a high "false positive" rate - a 1 percent caudal-fold response rate is standard due to cattle health and environmental issues. Most of these cattle are negative on the confirmatory test done by regulatory veterinarians. Guidelines enhancing the quality of practitioner tests are being developed.

California's Eradication Plan

- Investigate all cattle imported into California that may have been associated with TB infection in Arizona, Kansas, New Mexico, Texas and Michigan.
- Maintain enhanced slaughter surveillance in all California's slaughter plants.
- Improve live cattle testing procedures through training and education.
- Prepare to apply for Free status in April 2005.

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